



## News release

### The New Forest Half Marathon

Date: September 2005  
Location: New Milton, New Forest

### Debbie's First Half Marathon Story

By: Debbie Haden

#### New Forest September 05

At some point this year I thought I'd have a go at the half marathon, after doing a few 10ks and 10 milers, I thought why not! So I sent off my form for the New Forest Half in May this year and started training. I realised after sending off the form that it was indeed a "little" hilly. Not only had I entered a race where the mileage was a little on the high side but also seems that the roads were a bit that way too. So that was it, Arundel hills it was every other Sunday morning.

I got to New Milton quite early on race day and was feeling nervous to say the least. It was a warm morning and there was a nice buzz of runners around the fete area buying cups of tea and T-shirts. I was quite impressed by the T-shirts as they were a nice lavender colour so I had to buy one. It did cross my mind that I would definitely have to finish the race now I'd bought the T-shirt. As we got lined up in New Milton High Street I bumped into Kerry and Gavin. I spotted them a mile off in the Tone Zone shirts, they are so handy for seeing people! It was nice to see some familiar faces. I then plugged myself in to my "Hoon" music as Dave my boyfriend calls it (ok it is hardcore dance music!) and off we went. Adrenaline kicks in and we all do the usual fast 7-minute mileing pace before knocking out at the first mile! (When will I ever learn?!) Then the HILLS started.

After the third hill, I started getting used to the ups and downs and started regulating my pace and sipping loads of water because it was getting really quite warm. Running in the midday heat was having an effect on a few people who were walking by mile 5. It dawned on me that I wasn't even half way. GULP. As I approached the 6 mile point my stomach was like a washing machine, not sure if the breakfast earlier was agreeing with me so I slowed down to get rid of the pains and with more



water and more HOON music (*don't you mean hooligan music Debs?!! Editor*) I tried to concentrate on other things. The marshals were friendly and seemed quite jolly and the scenery was nice, even though it did seem that we were in the middle of nowhere. I saw some wild horses which was a good distraction but by mile 8 it was starting to get really warm and the sponges they give you at the water stations were fantastic to cool down with.

After having a chat with a veteran runner at mile 10, I was feeling fine and the hills were ok at this point. There was a little boy in his garden hosing runners down and people in the pubs cheering everybody on the way. I saw Dave at this point with my sister and her boyfriend who were having a ploughman's lunch and a beer (OOOHHHHH!). Great to see them and that was a great boost as I was now entering the 11<sup>th</sup> mile which my legs had never done before today ANOTHER GULP.

Mile 12 seemed like mile 15 to me and my legs were quite jelly like. The course at this point seems to level out so it was a relief to know that there were no more hills. Then I got a lovely bout of STITCH, it always seems to come and visit me so I had to walk a bit to get rid of it and then we entered the final stretch. Well I thought I had better run in at the finish but as my stitch decided that it was going to join me until the end, I staggered into the finish line at the leisure centre and had several cups of squash to cool down. A brilliant race but it was HARD. I have to say with the hills and the warm temperature, I thought it was a tough race. After agreeing to meet Dave and co at the car I set off to find the car park. It was after 25 minutes of walking around New Milton that I realised that I was totally lost. There were no runners in sight and people were looking at me a bit strangely. (Can't think why..?!!) I then spotted a police station where a nice policeman pointed out that I had walked 3 miles in the wrong direction and if I had walked in the opposite direction from the finish line it would have took 5 minutes to get back to the car! Oh dear, so eventually I got back to the car and collapsed in a heap with a mars bar and a tube of jaffas! I remember thinking at that point that I might have a go at the FULL New Forest marathon next year.....must have been the heat..... here's to the next time!

**Tone Zone Runners were:**

Paul Foster 1:36:42 Gavin Dutton 1:41:49 Debbie Haden 2:00:14 Kerry Dutton 2:32:34

*Well done Debs on completing your first Half - and what a "tuffie" to chose!*  
*Editor*